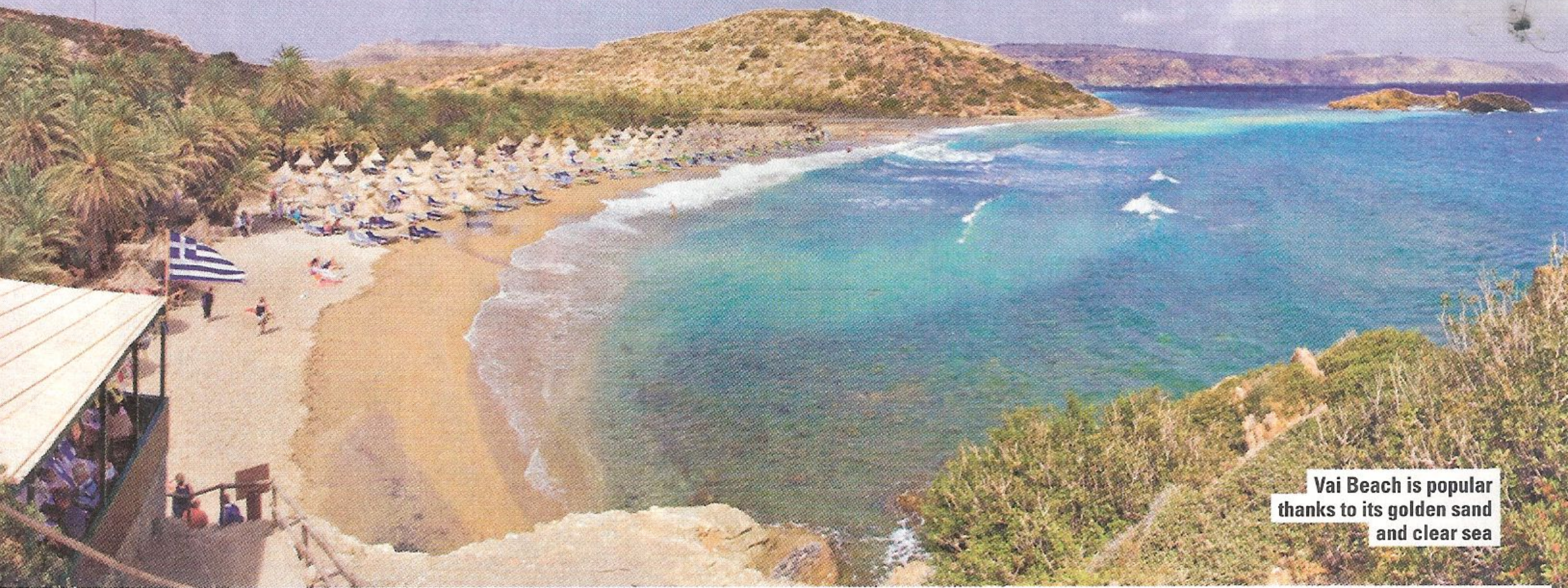
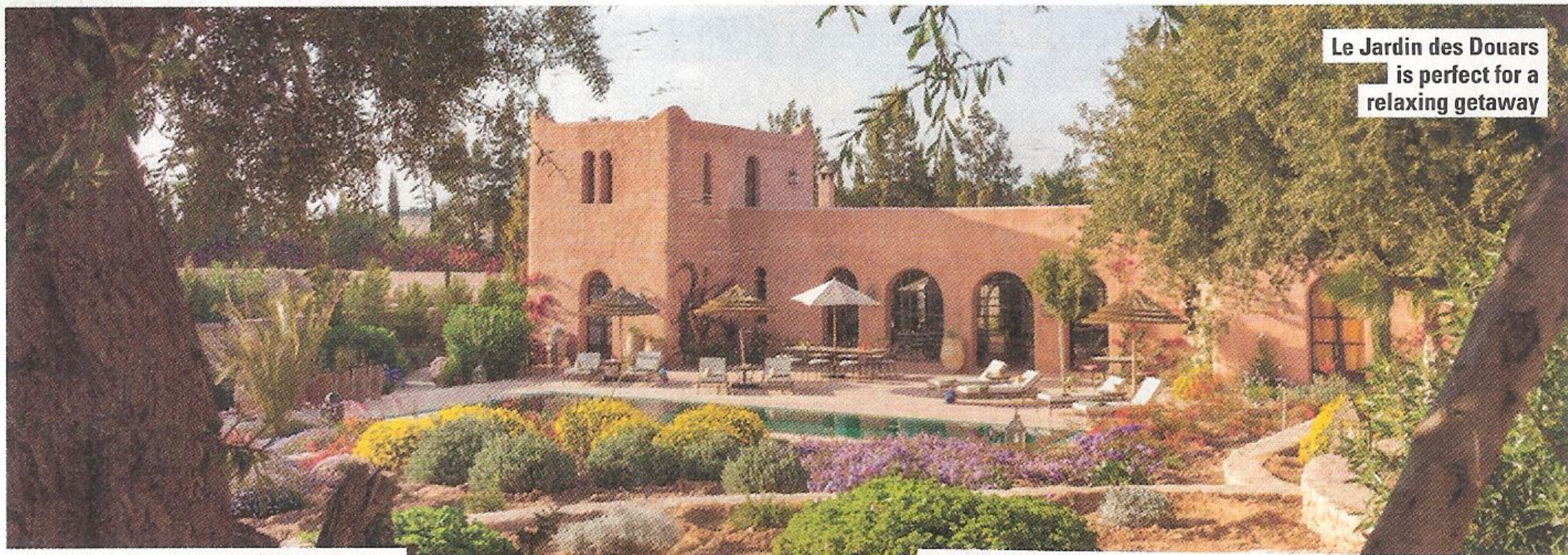


# Bring it on!

Beat the winter blues by getting your summer holiday booked now!



Vai Beach is popular thanks to its golden sand and clear sea



Le Jardin des Douars is perfect for a relaxing getaway

## ESSAOUIRA

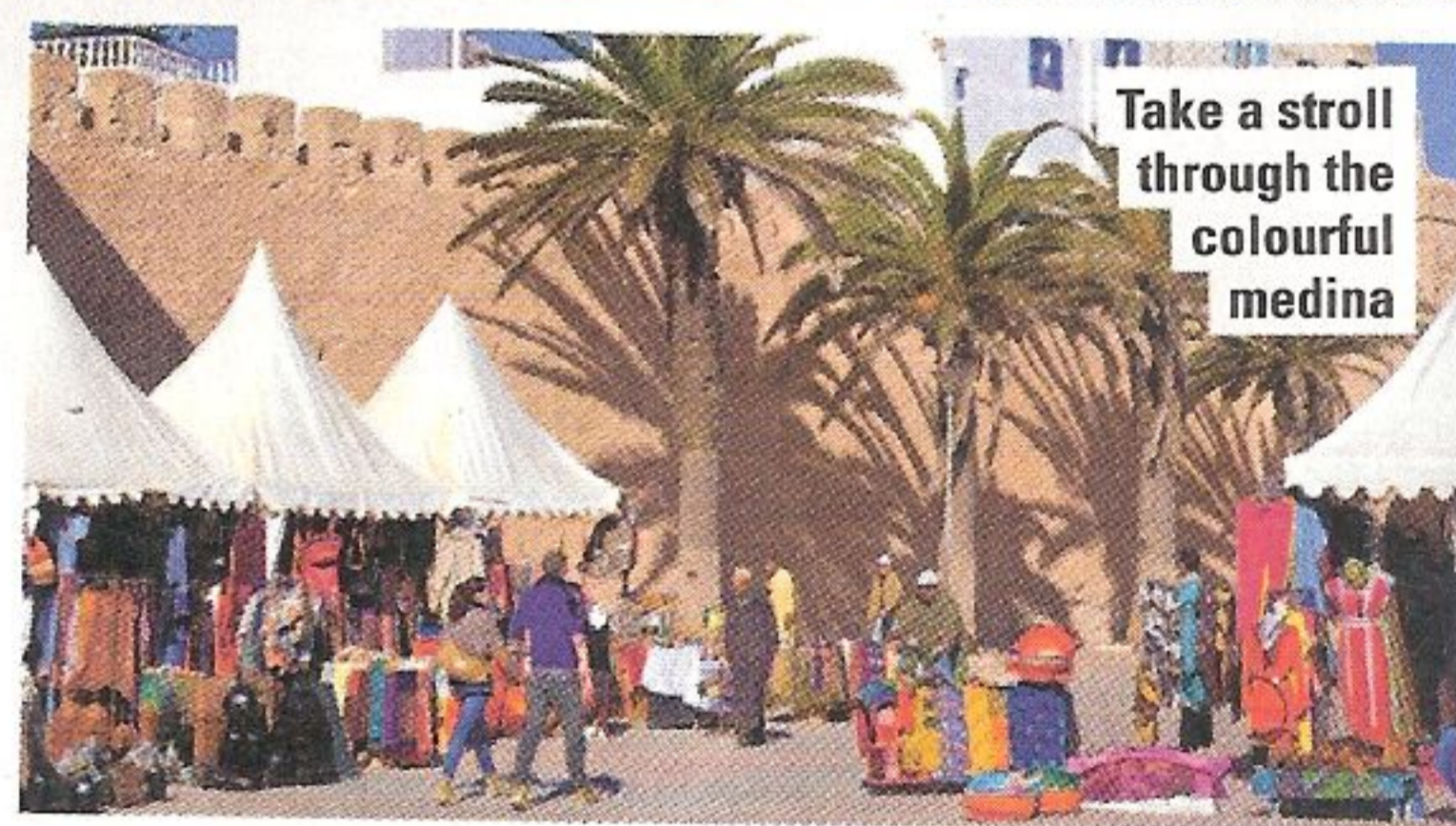
**WHERE TO STAY** In the hills above Essaouira – a laid-back seaside town with sandy beaches on Morocco's west coast – lies the picturesque Le Jardin des Douars, a 26-room residence set among beautifully kept botanical gardens. All the rooms are adorned with Moroccan art, textiles and lamps, and have a real rustic charm. There are even traditional hammam kits in each bathroom!

Foodies will love the two restaurants in the resort, where you can feast on local catch of the day and Moroccan favourites such as lamb tagine. Families are made to feel welcome, but if you're on a romantic break, there's also a couples-only dining area – and afterwards you can enjoy a drink outside under the stars. On a Sunday, they do a huge BBQ lunch, which includes tasty swordfish, fresh salads and desserts.

Relaxation is the order of the day here, so there are no TVs in the rooms. Instead you're encouraged to switch off and relax by the pool and in the gardens, where turtles and a peacock roam freely.

There's a family pool where kids can splash around and an adults-only pool for those looking for a more tranquil environment. We also visited the spa and tried a black soap hammam – an exfoliation treatment in a steam room – and felt thoroughly refreshed afterwards.

**OUT AND ABOUT** Take the hotel shuttle to the medina, where you can buy everything from textiles and spices to argan oil in the souks, and grab lunch at Ocean Vagabond Restaurant



Take a stroll through the colourful medina

– a popular, beachside restaurant serving local cuisine. We had a fab time riding a camel along Sidi Kaouki beach (about £12 for an hour). You can also go horse riding, zip through the sand dunes on a quad bike or try your hand at windsurfing.

**NEED TO KNOW** See EasyJet.com for direct flights to Essaouira from London Luton, from £18.99 per person each way. Book your accommodation at [Jardindesdouars.com](http://Jardindesdouars.com), double rooms from £140 per night B&B.



Julia Roberts has holidayed in Essaouira